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Redefining ASEAN Way: Democratization and Intergovernmental Relations in Southeast Asia*

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Abstract

This paper reviews inter-state relations in Southeast Asia countries. Regionalism in Southeast Asia has been criticized on its limited achievement in political development, Political development in this region focuses more on nation's interests than regional interests. Added to this, there is a lack of political channel outside formal government relations hinders political connectivity among Southeast Asian people.

The aim of this paper is threefold. Firstly, to analyze the pattern of political development in Southeast Asian region. Secondly, to assess the implication of using non-interference principle for maintaining political relations in Southeast Asian region and its contribution to the lack of political awareness regionally. Thirdly, to propose new political diplomacy concerned with promoting political awareness regionally.

This paper ends by providing an alternative type of political diplomacy by combining formal diplomacy actions done by state institution and informal diplomacy actions done by non-government actors. We point out an alternative strategy to promote political awareness in Southeast Asian community in the future. First, open policy to connecting the diplomatic based community. Second, optimize the regional cooperation with more concern with democracy and human rights issue. Third, building and institutionalizing political awareness through people participation.

Key words: *regional cooperation, non-interference principal, political awareness, communitarian*

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Introduction

Regionalism in Southeast Asia is dominantly related to ASEAN. Since it was established over 50 years ago, it appears that strategical position of ASEAN has not been able to bring the significant form of mutual understanding among the members. The positive achievement in terms of economic development within this region contributes a minor progress in narrowing inequalities between countries. Previously, economic growth within this region was followed by certain reduction of inequalities between countries. There was also some progress in term of poverty alleviation. After the 1990s, however, economic growth only facilitates the increase in inequalities between Southeast Asia countries. Interestingly, inequality within country shows different pattern. Inequality trends have diverged, with inequality rising in Indonesia and falling in Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines; in part due to policy Efforts (Jain-Chandra et al., 2016). In terms of internal mobility within this region, there is an intriguing interaction between people in Southeast Asia countries. A study shows that 97 per cent of the 6.5 million internal migration in 2013 only circulates in three countries: Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore. In a more specific scale, of a total of 88 per cent of internal migration, connecting eight corridors (ILO & ADB, 2014).

In the context of social and political matters, however, connectivity among Southeast Asian people is very limited. This circumstance exists because there is a lack of political channel caused by straight government policy. In the study of BTI (2016), there are two processes that are

taking place in Asia. *First*, political processes fail to build democracy as in South Korea and Taiwan and enforces consolidated autocracies in China, Laos, Singapore, and Vietnam. *Second*, there is unstable autocracies occurred in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Thailand. Added to this, civil society organizations get significant pressure from autocratic power and only a few among those organizations who have political representation. BTI (2016) also found that countries with high economic growth, such as Singapore and Vietnam showed that political stability, strong government institutions, and tight administration control are factors contribute to economic transformation. Hence, there is a little progress in flourishing democratization at the regional level.

The studies noted that the concept of ASEAN way is a passive response and it tends to hinder the progress of democratization. The ASEAN way is going into the debate and still unclear, hence, it needs to get a more extensive explanation (Haacke, 1999; Acharya, 2001). Other study cited that the ASEAN way may represent the collective identity of ASEAN crystallized in the principle of non-intervention or silent diplomacy (Rüland, 2000; Nischalke, 2000). In some cases, however, the ASEAN way is more than just the principle of non-intervention. Some evidence depicts the success in the intervention of domestic conflicts such as in Cambodia (Goh, 2003). Unfortunately, weak political intervention to foster democratization in this region only facilitates a hijack of the ASEAN Way led by autocratic power. These are caused by the inclination of the state sovereignty and

policy priorities in maintaining domestic stability (Katsumata, 2003).

Moreover, the achievement of economic growth is not always followed by an increase in regional exchange to share democratic values. Studies on democratization showed findings varied. In Malaysia and Singapore, democracy runs within the strong-state authority, where the stability of the regime occurs due to its strong control over political activities (Slater, 2012). On the other side, democratization in Indonesia successfully reduces state authority but it also facilitates the rise of oligarch (Hadiz & Richard Robinson, 2013). In general, there is no single factor that causes stagnant democratization in this region. Specific explanation of the difficulties of democracy establishment relies on the tradition of the political elites who have a concern to dominate the political system. Thus, democracy merely produces "elected autocrat" (Kurlantzick, 2012).

This paper will answer the question of: to what the extent the redefinition of ASEAN way should able to solve regional politics problem? We offer normative assessment based on the cultural approach to undertaking the ideal type of inter-governmental relationships in this region. We use the interpretive analysis on the concepts of forming the ASEAN cooperation and undertake the theoretical review to explain the compatibility of democracy in this region.

This paper consists of three discussions, namely: 1) restrictive conceptions on intergovernmental relations analysis to obtain the possibility or probability for interconnectivity amongst governments in politically sensitive issues;

2) explanation on the extension of the boundaries of regionalism towards democratization pressure to create open regionalism; 3) designing the model of political awareness as an active concept of non-intervention.

Scoping Government Interaction

The intergovernmental relationship in Southeast Asian region comes into dynamics situation. It attracts scholars to contribute to the theoretical discussion on regionalism perspective. Generally, regionalism is interpreted as a policy and a tremendous project where some actors from state or non-state engage in cooperative and coordinate their common good for the region. Krasner (1983), stated that some aspects have necessarily to be identified related to some norms, rules, and procedures which may be met to the expectation of some different actors. We argue that regionalism in ASEAN is viewed as an interplay between political development, pseudo-nationalism, and closed regionalism.

The important variable needs to be explored in the discussion of regionalism is political development. Even though there are variations of political development within this region, but there is a tendency for centralizing political power as a model of political development. It can be seen in Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore. The government authority had dominant control in public life even though citizen is still given political space if not considered as national stability threat. We argue that centralistic government-style with significant political power is intended to create political subsistence aimed to ensure the stability of the domestic economy. Hence, political development in this region only focused

merely on country's interests rather than regional interests.

This pattern of political development continued until the early of the 1990s. Afterward, regionalism became a well-known issue which discussed since the shifting of worldwide power constellation. ASEAN regionalism was reconstructed to become tether of expectation for strengthening government control capacity. The expansion form of ASEAN consultation with other state or regional cooperation counterpart had significance only to improve regional economic development. By the expansion of Japan and China, it had a possibility to transform larger regional economic agenda, namely Asian economic agenda. This kind of action, however, is inadequate for developing the democratic pattern in Southeast Asian region. Two explanations on this matter. Firstly, Southeast Asian economic actors do not have any specific interest to ensure the establishment of democracy because they are more interested to expand their business outside Southeast Asian region due to its economic advantages. Secondly, China and Japan also have limited attention on the political matter during its economic expansion in Southeast Asian region. China has strong desire to become the center of regional corporation in Asia (Wunderlich, 2008). The tendency to secure its energy security and market expansion, however, makes China does not put significant attention to political development in Asia.

Southeast Asian region has an opportunity to increase political development rapidly. It can be ignored that there are difficulties to maintain its political development related to the problem of establishing democratization.

Democratization, however, may contribute to the structural political change in each country. Moreover, it also gives adequate influenced pressure for the pattern of regional relationship, especially inter-political agencies. Democratization provides a great opportunity for replacing *state-centric* model that puts the state as a center for all the interaction. Ideally, democratization within regionalism becomes a part of the political commitment to fight against authoritarian style in domestic politics whether by self-modality based on domestic capacity and capability or by using stronger power from the outside.

State-centric model came from the definition extended by Weberian that gave larger space for the optimization of state authority. General view concerning the role of the state puts the government as the superior political agency. To control extensively, the authority requires the existence of internal loyalty and external acknowledgment. Hence, the state should not only act for their interest but should also represent the interest of others outside the government. It can be stated that decision making process within the state is an arena of many interests and the results represent the dynamic interaction amongst them (Moravcsik, 1999).

From this perspective, the model of state authority influences the behavior of its governmental regime. Governmental behavior has its scope and can be divided into bilateral and multilateral. A bilateral relationship is developed both with countries within region and countries outside regions. While a multilateral relationship is developed both with regional countries and different regional countries. Both of those stages become natural fence

which indicates that the government has limited scope for territory and sovereignty.

Another variable which needs to be observed is the “network establishment” in the regional cooperation. Domestic regime commonly brings function as motivator or catalyst for strengthening relationship within the jurisdictional region. The pattern of organized network provides sufficient stability which indicates non-hierarchical and interdependent attitude. Moreover, it is also connecting various actors who share high mutual interest and trust as a sign of togetherness. This kind of cooperation with collective purpose achievement considered as an ideal type of regionalism (Börzel, 1997). Hence, regionalism should be viewed as a complex and multi-facet process involving both formal and informal integration supported by networks from government and society.

Democratization and Regionalism: A Crossing Boundaries

Regionalism has limited attention to integrating the regional interest with the promotion of democracy. Regional integration tends to consider more on economic, social and cultural aspects and has a limited action to bring the spirit of democracy when dealing with domestic politics. It is very important to change the essence of regionalism where economic interests are superior than commitment on democratization. Added to this, ASEAN gives limited interest to strengthen the inter-citizen relationship to spread democratic values. Consequently, ASEAN has lost its opportunity to create reciprocal dialogue to broader political issues. It is not surprise that ASEAN is viewed as an elite integration rather than people integration. Hence, it is

highly obvious that the type of regional integration only concerns with institutional policy and behavior, but it has less connected with people’s interests, namely democratization with specific values embedded within ASEAN society.

The concept of regionalism in Asia needs to be viewed as a representation of ASEAN value, namely communitarian. Moreover, democratization is considered as specific value embedded in ASEAN society. Domestic politics that becomes a threat to the institutionalization of democracy is important to get an attention. Undoubtedly, there are some countries who had an unsteady political situation. The process of democratization faces significant challenges as it can be seen in Kampuchea, Laos, and Vietnam. On these countries, build the commitment for integrating democracy with domestic politics is not an easy task to be done. We argue that the participation of ASEAN in the process of democratization in their members will give significant contribution to the deepening democratic spirit in that countries. Moreover, it can reduce the participation of external actors such the United States or European countries to involve in domestic politics within ASEAN countries.

We need to consider that there is no homogeneous political culture in the region. As it can be seen from the polarization of state political institution that is divided in the form of absolute monarch, constitutional monarch, republic, socialist and junta military. Meanwhile, governmental structure is also varied, namely: presidential, parliamentary, Leninist, and military dictator. Clark Neher and Ross Marlay (1995) classify this region into four categories in term of democratic scales: semi-

democracy, semi-authoritarian, authoritarian based on citizen participation, electoral competition and civil freedom. Democratic implementation which has electoral competition and civil freedom is relatively well known in Indonesia, Philippines, and Thailand.

Even though some countries show positive performance to accept the democracy, it does not mean that there are limited political obstacles in those countries. Attempts of the military coup, political competition among elites, local resistances and separatism are among potential problems faced by countries such as Indonesia, Philippine, and Thailand. In other words, serious political problems still exist, even though democracy is also flourishing. With this circumstance, it gives relevance for ASEAN to strengthen its contributions to democracy with the spirit of ASEAN: communitarianism.

Expanding spectrum of democratization will bring a better consequence for the intergovernmental process of negotiation. Democratization model is not homogenous. It needs to represent and accommodate political tradition. Hence, it allows variety of domestic political management in each country. One good example is what happened in Myanmar. The crisis was handled by two things: regional cooperation through ASEAN participation and public awareness regarding humanitarian issues. The act of regional institution combined with people awareness and participation are potentially reducing the crisis.

Democratization with Asian values may be used as a moral reference that is formed by the characteristic of social

structure and kinship containing a set of mutual share principle and doing something for a community (Inoguchi, 1998). Political culture in the Southeast Asia is closely related to kinship system that influences the shape of interaction or inter-institutional relationship. Personal figure is very important for the whole process for taking decision. Fukuyama (1995) described an example like in China which strictly develops the greatness of family.

Specifically, in the Southeast Asia, it seems that the personal trust exceeds social trust. It needs a new formulation where the combination between colleague trust and formal regulation of political institution is established. Regional integration needs to take into accounts the urgency of using the basic value of society when establishing regional policy and behavior. Marsh (ed. 2006) mentioned that Malaya cultural background is less influence compared to China cultural background to governmental behavior. On the contrary, other aspects such as ideology, whether it is liberal democracy or authoritarian, influences more (Blondel, Sinnott, & Svensson, 1998). Hence, establishing connectivity by strengthening colleague trust as a manifestation of cultural values as an important aspect of developing regional policy and behavior is very important action to be done.

The design of communitarian democracy that is accommodating local values is essential for ASEAN. Communitarian democracy differs with western liberal democracy in terms of providing space for local wisdom-cultural values, instead of abandoning these values. It is expected that by using local wisdom-cultural values that embrace the sense of communitarian, democratization in region

and promoting regional-based conflict resolution for any political dispute within ASEAN are truly established. The sense of communitarian among people will develop substantially if connectivity does exist. To be on that stage, we need to consider, what we call, “political awareness”. ASEAN community needs to consider opening more extensive opportunity for instituting political instruments, where the regional political institutions may be used for supporting the design of political awareness. Civilian also has a good experience to manage a better integration, not only in the economic field but also in sociopolitical policy and regional security (Bersick & Pasch, 2007).

Designing Political Awareness

We view the concept of political awareness as an awareness of citizens to accept a concept of political action and the results of the political process. Political awareness has a direct impact on certain aspects such as the political action of citizens and their political behavior which is dependent on the intake and supply of political information (Zaller, 1990).

Political awareness is an urgent agenda needed to be strengthened in ASEAN. There are reasons for it. First, each government tends to strengthen regional diplomacy by not having interfered with domestic problems faced by other ASEAN members as an act of implementing the principle of non-interference. Human rights violation in Papua, Rohingya persecution in Myanmar, and the arrest of pro-democracy activists in Malaysia, as examples, did not bring significant political attention regionally. Consequently, attention between ASEAN members toward some political

issues occurred in one country becomes very minimum, even though the political issues may affect other countries or regional stability. This kind of diplomacy leads to political ignorance between ASEAN members and it reduces mutual understanding between countries. We cannot ignore that non-interference principal is chosen by considering sociocultural aspects embedded in Southeast Asian society. The implementation of this principal, however, should also consider the importance of responsiveness among others about the political problems that can significantly influence regional politics.

Second, the regional intercommunity relationship has already been formed but limited action has been done to foster this society relationship to strengthen regional connectivity among ASEAN people. Domestically, network of non-government organization (NGOs) is flourishing. Regionally, the connectivity between NGOs tends to focus on specific issues related to the concern of NGOs but it gives less attention to strengthen political awareness and political dialogues. In other words, a potential asset that already exists between civil society to create connectivity among civil society is ignored.

Third, the regional corporation that strongly relies on non-interference principal provides complexity when defining which problems needed to tackle domestically and which problems that needs regional attention and actions. This complexity gives dis-incentive for ASEAN to maintain regional interest and become important actors within regions. As a result, ASEAN does not use the opportunity to foster inter-country relationship by using its unique

cultural and traditional ASEAN values to tackle domestic problems.

Political issues slant Southeast Asian countries can compare into two scales. It particularly appears during the last second decade, facilitated by the increase of worldwide political escalation and the spread of these issues through transnational channels. The first scale is regional issue, which emerges as the effect of global interaction. After the 9/11, this region takes a significant attention to war against terrorism programs sponsored by the USA under President George W. Bush. This agenda results to the domino effect toward the existence of transcultural communities within this region due to the idea of polarization and stigmatization between radical and non-radical community or terrorist and non-terrorist organization.

The second scale is domestic government issue contributing to the regional stability. There is a fluctuation relationship among countries in Southeast Asian region, especially when it comes to the bilateral relationship. Pursuing its national interests rather than promoting mutual understanding among ASEAN member is becoming the picture of the bilateral relationship. Moreover, there is a tendency of conducting political ignorance when it comes to the political issues of one country. Separatist issue occurred in Pattani, Southern Thailand; Papua, Indonesia; and Moro, Philippines is only viewed as internal matters and does not bring more attention to build regional collaborative act to solve the problems. ASEAN is seen to do anything but ignorance. It can be stated that ASEAN provides limited incentives for bringing truly intergovernmental interaction in the political matter.

On the other side, no country has the courage to bring domestic political issues to become regional political issues. The problem is that this situation is worsened by the increase in political cooperation between ASEAN state members and external actors such as developed country and other multilateral cooperation beyond the regional boundary. Thus, regional politics in this region is picturized by political ignorance and political dependence into external actor outside the region such as China, USA, and Russia. This article tries to bring the attention of the limited political awareness among ASEAN member. Moreover, this article also reviews the recent political value of this region that too much rely on non-interfere principal. Specific attention is given to the issue of political awareness between countries which is politically abandoned.

There is an urgent need to emphasize political awareness in the way ASEAN members construct their diplomacy. It is an urgent action to put political awareness as a spirit of cultural and political diplomacy. The concept of political awareness refers to the establishment of space for mutual understanding among countries which are not only concentrated on domestic issues but also extend to some issues across the country in logical reason and boundary. Political awareness insists to each country for having an equal responsibility in a mutual understanding frame, concerning with the need of promoting and protecting regional democratization. Thus, a mutual controlling dynamic for each country may have maximum power to put the position of each country as balancing force against political unstableness.

Using a case of Spratley Archipelago, a territorial dispute between some ASEAN

countries and China, we can see that the maintenance of political stability in this region is ignoring the importance of seeking a solution by maximizing the role of ASEAN to involve actively in regional politics. In the positive side, the involvement of external actor outside ASEAN gives contribution for problem resolution by forming partner for dialogue. While from the negative side, the external environment affects cohesion of ASEAN policy itself (Yoshimatsu, 2006). More importantly, the role of ASEAN is dominated by the active role of external actors. Hence, political stability in this region at some degree has significant dependency on external actors rather than internal actors. Important assessment regarding this issue came from Emmers (2003), he evaluated that ASEAN had its own way in resolving its different problems in every case and for each member. There is no legal mechanism which allow to approach each problem by using dialogue effort for achieving collective consensus. The main frame for this consensus is national sovereignty and non-inference politics in the domestic matter. Consequently, the desire to maintain their domestic interests rather than regional interests is obvious. With this situation, each country does not want to be politically tied, thus, they become an unpredictable agent.

We are emphasizing alternative pathways to strengthen the work of ASEAN. *First*, develop the network among non-state actors. Civil societies in Southeast Asian region need to strengthen its communication and collaboration regionally. Cultural bonding as an Asian people can be used to strengthen solidarity and trust among Asian people. This network can be expected to perform the significant collaborative action to solve regional problems instead of invite

actors from outside region. Eliminating external pressure and infiltration will be additional benefits from this action.

Second, facilitate the connectivity between economic actors, especially to maximize regional market. Regional market within ASEAN country provides benefits mainly for big corporations especially when each economic actor only focuses in their own domestic market. ASEAN corporations tend to choose international market than develop market within ASEAN territory due to economic advantage's consideration. A new type of regional economic connectivity, especially done by small and medium enterprises could bring positive progress not only in terms of economic benefits but also social benefits. Connectivity between economic actors will develop a better understanding of others led to the collaborative work for maximizing regional market for ASEAN's economic actors.

Third, build a stronger altruism spirit. We cannot ignore that each country has domestic problems that potentially becomes regional problems. Abu Sayyaf group in Philippine, as an example, tends to be viewed as the domestic problem in Philippine rather than an embryo for regional problems faced by all ASEAN member. Being selfish and ignore each other - as the best action of *the ASEAN way*-, however, is only postpone the development of problems. It needs urgent attitude change among countries to put concern for the other interests.

Fourth, reduce the dependency to external actors outside ASEAN to solving local or regional problems. There is a tendency where involving external actors, mainly powerful countries, is the first

reaction among ASEAN countries rather than relying on inviting ASEAN to solve domestic problems. Terrorism, illegal migration, drug trafficking problems, and territory dispute as it is shown at South China Sea are some examples of that tendency. Strengthen trust and commitment among ASEAN countries and between ASEAN countries with other counterparts to settle problems using peaceful and durable solution as it already undertakes when announcing the Declaration on The Conduct of Parties in The South China Sea (DOC) be implemented seriously.

Neighboring Partnership

Has government realized what they should do in neighboring life? This simple question has a significant implication for the improvement of regional cooperation, whether it is represented by ASEAN as regional cooperation institution or another initiative in the relationship of intergovernmental. Focused on ASEAN, the issue of well-neighboring concept is still problematic. Pursuing their internal benefits when conducting diplomatic matters rather than regional benefits is one explanation for this situation. Moreover, ASEAN country tends to choose bilateral relationship to gain expected benefits due to its less complexity than regional relationship. Bilateral relationship that always emphasizes more on internal benefits among two countries conducted relationship is an advantage behind that choice.

One of the basic things strictly observed is that conflict resolution model in ASEAN is less powerful. The cause relates to the very strong nationalist politics in each country. Hence, the intergovernmental organization such regional organization play

less significant role. A new form of approach needs to be offered. ASEAN members need to be pushed to create a closer cooperation and formulate policy collectively. As happened in Kampuchea in the 1980s or ASEAN reconciliation mission in East Timor, both change political mindset, particularly in the concept of autonomy and self-government (Vatikiotis, 2006).

The regional issue needs to be resolved by considering the expectation of the people in this region. Cooperation and consultation which bring mutual benefit among the countries involved in the issues may influence the type of solution. Cultural similarity in ASEAN community is commonly considered have a significant power in searching for the solution. One example for this is in the effective conflict resolution based on cooperative principle. It might be traced from what was stated by the Indonesian ex-minister of foreign affairs in 1979 concerning with communicatively conflict resolution (Anwar, 1994). The same thing may be known from Ghazali Shafi'e who commented in Malaysia that collective cultural inheritance was spirit of togetherness in a big *kampong* (village/country) of Southeast Asia. Estrella Solidum from the Philippines underlined ASEAN way is consistent with the cultural elements that every member of ASEAN has. ASEAN way is viewed as process of taking policy based on consultation and consensus, informally, non-confrontation and collective benefit (Acharya, 2001).

Indeed, the establishment of supranational organization in Southeast Asia has limited prospect or better future. There are three main reasons for that. *First*, historically, there is no political authority that dominantly governs to this region. The

second is ideological reason, where nationalism becomes the main trigger to the emergence of resistance against colonialism. Hence, nationalism exceeds regionalism. *Lastly*, until now there is no country who wants to play powerfully as regional leaders. ASEAN form which is static and with no political integrated orientation should be tested for the next further period. Political dynamics of intercountry relationship in this region is extremely influenced by external pressure. On the other side, the accumulation of domestic issues in this region until now does not come up with an effective resolution, yet.

A space for discussing various kind of governmental interest, not only in the case of giving protection for the citizen but also for national interest, maybe accommodated in special diplomatic action which is considering another country as part of strategic partnership cooperation. Strategic partnership cooperation is needed to be strengthened to gain better understanding and perception among countries.

Another framework which has better opportunity in the context of regional cooperation is a neighboring partnership. Philosophical background of this framework comes from some positive elements in closer social life. Neighbor is a part of someone closer life. In Southeast Asian society tradition, collectivity becomes a foundation of interfamily interaction, however, it has not hit the boundary of privacy for each territory.

Implementation of neighborhood partnership needs a precondition that should be fulfilled by each country. Low trust among countries within ASEAN is needed to be minimized due to its impacts

on reducing in consensus's effectiveness. Without that, well-established cooperation and the optimization of the result of cooperation among ASEAN members will be far away to be reached.

A legal and formal cooperative framework is extremely needed. International law should also need to become compulsory. Consensual and political approaches in regional relationship within ASEAN, however, must be strengthened to maintain positive achievement. It is functioned for covering the impasse of formal diplomatic line or limited negotiation toward some exertions or services that are involving the interest of country beyond the region.

Collectivity and caring one with another should not be considered as part of one's aggressiveness toward each other. With this new understanding, involving in one country's matter should not be viewed as an act of interfering with the domestic issue of one country. On the other side, proactive offer should also be provided in the incidental cases that need urgent responses.

Conclusion

ASEAN is unique regional cooperation. There is some achievement in economic development in this region, however, regional integration provides little benefits in terms of political development. The principle of non-interference as a code of conduct for maintaining regional diplomacy reduces significantly a political awareness to the political matters. Therefore, political connectivity among Southeast Asian countries is limited.

This paper has opened a space for further discussion as an attempt to design both formal and informal field for intercountry regional relationship. A significant recommendation from this article is to review non-interference concept of ASEAN since it only results to a deferment of conflict explosion. In addition, Future agenda on implementing democracy based on communitarian tradition must be the principal regional agenda to support the implementation of neighborhood partnership model. With this proposal, it is expected that political awareness among people in Southeast Asian region replaces political ignorance embedded within non-interference principle. Connectivity, that is the heart of regional integration, then, is no longer an illusion.

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